

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A computer-implemented method comprising:
 automatically requesting database connection information ~~from a web application server~~ to a database ~~upon initialization of the~~ **during initialization of a** web application server;
 accessing a key phrase from a ~~file system of the web application server~~ **central directory of a distributed system** responsive to the request for the connection information;
 combining a system identifier of the web application server with the key phrase to ~~obtain~~ **create** an ~~effective~~ encryption key;
 obtaining a ~~name/value~~ string from a secure storage file in a ~~global~~ **the central** directory via a find operation;
 parsing the ~~name/value~~ string into a name string and a value string; and
 decrypting the value string with the ~~effective~~ encryption key to obtain the database connection information.

2-4. (Cancelled)

5. **(Original)** The method of claim 1, wherein accessing the key phrase comprises:

prompting for input to the application server that provides the key phrase.

6. (Cancelled)

7. **(Previously Presented)** The method of claim 1, wherein database connection information includes at least one of:

a password for the database; and

an address for the database.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the address for the database is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

9-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein decrypting the value string comprises:

decrypting the value string with a triple Data Encryption Standard (DES) algorithm.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the obtained connection information includes a Java string.

14-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the Web application server is compatible with the J2EE standard.

18. (Previously Presented) A system comprising:
a web application server to access a key phrase from a filesystem of the web application server responsive to an automatic request to connect with a database ~~upon~~ **during** initialization of the web application server, wherein the web application server includes a system identifier to identify the application server and the key phrase is to be combined with the system identifier;
a central directory to store a ~~name/value~~ string and to provide the ~~name/value~~ string to the web application server responsive to receiving the combination of the system identifier and the key phrase from the web application server;
a parser to parse the ~~name/value~~ string; and
the database to provide requested data to the web application server.

19. (Cancelled)
20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the database is a relational database system.
- 21-22. (Cancelled)
23. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the Web application server is implemented according to the Java 2 Enterprise Edition Standard.
24. (Cancelled)
25. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 18, wherein the stored ~~value~~ string includes at least one of:
a password to connect with the remote node; and
an address of the remote node.
26. (Cancelled)
27. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 18, wherein the ~~value~~-string is to be stored in a data store of the central directory.
28. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the data store of the central directory is encrypted.
29. (Original) The system of claim 28 wherein the data store is encrypted with a triple DES algorithm.
30. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the data store of the central directory may be transitioned from storing unencrypted data to storing encrypted data.

31. **(Currently Amended)** An application server comprising:
a network interface to connect to a database; and
a processor and logic executable thereon to
automatically receive a request for database connection information to the
database ~~upon~~ during initialization of the application server,
access a key phrase from a central directory of a distributed system to
decrypt the requested database connection information, responsive to the request for
database connection information, and
obtain a ~~name/value~~-string from a secure storage file in a ~~global~~ central
directory via a find operation.

32-33. (Cancelled)

34. **(Previously Presented)** The application sever of claim 31, wherein the
database connection information includes at least one of:
a password for the database; and
an address for the database.

35. **(Original)** The application server of claim 34, wherein
the application server is a Web application server; and wherein
the address for the database is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

36. **(Currently Amended)** A system comprising:
means for automatically requesting database connection information to a
database from a web application server ~~to a database upon~~ during initialization of the
web application server;
means for accessing a key phrase from a ~~file system of the web application server~~
central directory of a distributed system responsive to the request for the connection
information;
means for combining a system identifier of the web application server with the
key phrase to ~~obtain~~ create an effective encryption key;

means for obtaining a ~~name/value~~-string from a secure storage file in a ~~global~~ **the central** directory via a find operation;

means for parsing the ~~name/value~~-string into a name string and a value string; and

means for decrypting the value string with the ~~effective~~-encryption key to obtain the database connection information.

37-38. (Cancelled)

39. **(Currently Amended)** An article of manufacture comprising:

an electronically accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by an apparatus, cause the apparatus to

automatically request database connection information **to a database** from a web application server ~~to a database upon~~ **during** initialization of the web application server;

access a key phrase from a ~~file system of the web application server~~ **central directory of a distributed system** responsive to the request for the connection information;

combine a system identifier of the web application server with the key phrase to obtain an ~~effective~~-encryption key;

obtain a ~~name/value~~-string from a secure storage file in a ~~global~~ **the central** directory via a find operation;

parse the ~~name/value~~ string into a name string and a value string; and

decrypt the value string with the ~~effective~~-encryption key to obtain the database connection information.

40-41. (Cancelled)

42. **(Original)** The article of manufacture of claim 39 wherein the instructions that, when executed by an apparatus, cause the apparatus to access the key phrase include instructions that cause the apparatus to

prompt a user of the application server to provide the key phrase.

43. (Original)The article of manufacture of claim 39, the requested connection information includes at least on of:

a password for the database; and
an address for the database.